

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method of managing occupants of a building during an emergency event, the method comprising:

- obtaining building information for a plurality of areas of the building;
- associating occupant information for an occupant located at one of the plurality of areas of the building with the corresponding building information;
- contacting the occupant using the occupant information during the emergency event; and
- obtaining a status of the occupant.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the obtaining building information step includes obtaining a hierarchical representation of the building, wherein the hierarchical representation includes:

- a floor node for each floor in the building; and
- at least one floor area node for at least one area of each floor in the building, wherein the occupant information is associated with the at least one floor area node.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein the occupant information includes:

- a user node for the occupant; and
- at least one device node comprising device information for a device associated with the occupant.

4. The method of claim 1, further comprising directing assistance to the occupant based on the status of the occupant.
5. The method of claim 1, further comprising providing an instruction to the occupant.
6. The method of claim 5, wherein the providing instructions step includes:
  - determining an exit route for the occupant; and
  - communicating the exit route to the occupant.
7. The method of claim 1, further comprising generating a summary of the statuses of a plurality of occupants.
8. A method of managing occupants of a physical area, the method comprising:
  - obtaining a plan for the physical area;
  - generating a hierarchical representation of the physical area based on the plan, wherein the hierarchical representation includes a plurality of area nodes;
  - obtaining occupant information for an occupant of the physical area; and
  - associating the occupant information with an area node in the hierarchical representation.
9. The method of claim 8, wherein the physical area includes a building.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein the generating step includes:
- creating a building node for the building;
  - identifying at least one floor in the building using the plan;
  - creating a floor node for each of the identified at least one floors;
  - adding each floor node as a child node of the building node;
  - identifying at least one floor area of the at least one floor using the plan;
  - creating a floor area node for each of the identified at least one floor areas; and
  - adding each floor area node as a child node of the floor node for the corresponding floor.
11. The method of claim 10, further comprising linking each area node to a corresponding area of the plan.
12. The method of claim 10, wherein the associating step includes:
- obtaining an office location for the occupant;
  - identifying an area node that corresponds to the office location; and
  - associating the occupant information with the area node.
13. The method of claim 10, wherein at least one area node includes contact information for contacting an occupant of the area.
14. The method of claim 8, wherein the occupant information includes contact information for contacting the occupant.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein the contact information includes at least one of: handheld device information, mobile telephone information, home telephone information, and pager information.

16. The method of claim 8, further comprising:

detecting an emergency event; and

communicating with the occupant using the hierarchical representation.

17. The method of claim 16, further comprising obtaining a status of the occupant.

18. A system for managing occupants of a physical area, the system comprising:

means for obtaining a plan for the physical area;

means for generating a hierarchical representation of the physical area based on the plan;

means for obtaining occupant information for an occupant of the physical area; and

means for associating the occupant information with an area node in the hierarchical representation.

19. The system of claim 18, further comprising means for communicating with the occupant during an emergency event.

20. The system of claim 18, further comprising means for providing directions to the occupant using the hierarchical representation.

21. The system of claim 20, wherein the directions comprise directions from a first location to a second location in a building.

22. A computer program product comprising a computer useable medium having computer readable program code embodied therein for managing occupants of a physical area, the program product comprising:

program code configured to obtain a plan for the physical area;

program code configured to generate a hierarchical representation of the physical area based on the plan;

program code configured to obtain occupant information for an occupant of the physical area; and

program code configured to associate the occupant information with an area node in the hierarchical representation.